HERITAGE CONSERVATION REPORT · JUNE 2026

रायगड किल्ला पुनरुद्धार कार्य

Raigad Fort Restoration — Comprehensive Report

Raigad Vikas Pradhikaran (Raigad Development Authority)
Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) · UNESCO World Heritage 2025

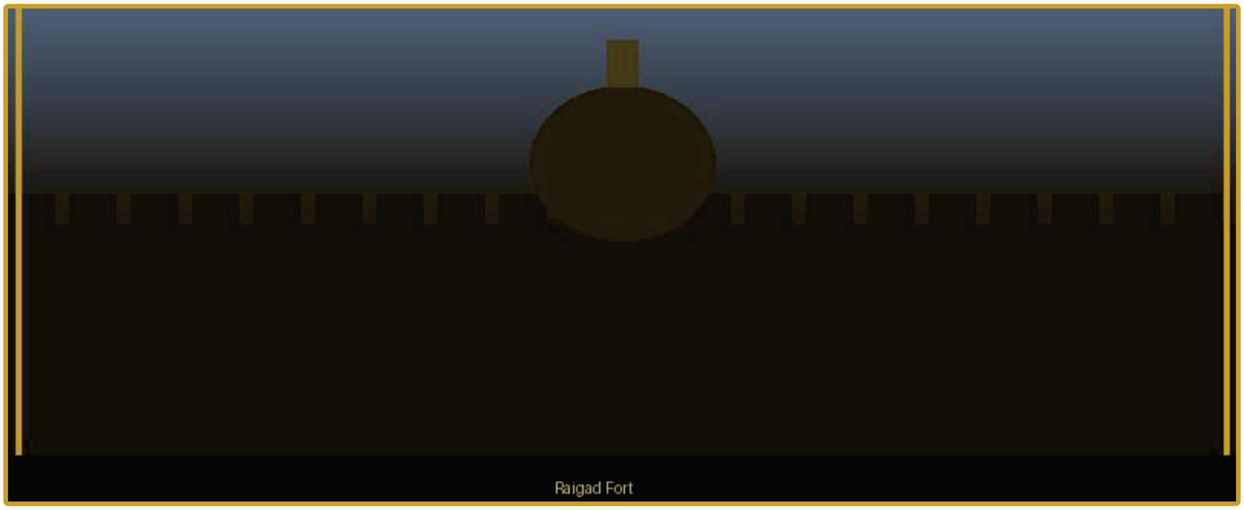
Covering: Nane Darwaja Reconstruction · Maha Darwaza Conservation
Fortification Walls · Hatti Talav · Jagdishwar Temple · Samadhi Area
Heritage Highway · Ropeway Upgrades · Rs. 606 Crore Development Plan

PLUS — Authentic Portraits of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj
from World Museums: British Museum · Rijksmuseum · BNF Paris
CSMVS Mumbai · Bonhams Collection

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1 Raigad Fort — Historical Significance



Raigad Fort (रायगड किल्ला) — Aerial perspective. Located 820m above sea level in the Sahyadri ranges, Raigad District, Maharashtra. Capital of Hindavi Swaraj from 1674. [Illustrative representation]

> रायगड — Raigad Fort, originally called Rairi, stands at 820 metres above sea level and 1,356 metres above mean sea level in the Sahyadri mountain ranges of the Konkan region, Maharashtra. Spread across over 1,300 acres, it is among the largest fort complexes in India by area.

Raigad Fort was initially built by the Chandrarao More clan around 1030 CE. It was captured and comprehensively rebuilt by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his chief architect-engineer Hiroji Indulkar in the 1650s–60s. On 6 June 1674, Shivaji Maharaj was coronated here as the sovereign king of the Hindavi Swaraj — the self-rule of the Indian people — marking one of the most momentous events in India's history. He made Raigad the capital of the Maratha Empire, and it served as such until the fort fell to the British in 1818.

The fort complex originally comprised the royal palace (Raj Bhavan), the Jagdishwar temple, the Nagarkhana (drum house), the Bazarpet (market avenue), the Ganga Sagar and Hatti Talav water tanks, multiple entrance gateways including the iconic Maha Darwaza and the Nane Darwaja, the Takmak Tok execution point, and the royal samadhi of Shivaji Maharaj. The fort is referred to as the "Gibraltar of the East" and "Durg Raj" — the King of Forts.

2 Raigad Development Authority (RDA) — Overview

> The Raigad Development Authority (रायगड विकास प्राधिकरण), also known as Raigad Vikas Pradhikaran, is the apex government body of Maharashtra responsible for the integrated development, conservation, and tourism enhancement of Raigad Fort and its surrounding heritage precinct. It operates under the Government of Maharashtra.

The RDA was constituted to address a critical gap: while the fort itself is a Centrally Protected Monument under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) since 1909, the broader surrounding zone — including access infrastructure, visitor facilities, and the heritage villages — required a dedicated state-level authority for coordinated development.

Mandate & Scope

- Conservation: Coordinating with ASI on primary archaeological excavation, conservation, and consolidation of fort structures
- Interpretation: Developing museums, signage, cultural notice boards, and visitor interpretation centres
- Infrastructure: Heritage highway from Mahad to Raigad, visitor reception centres, parking, sanitation, accommodation
- Heritage Precinct: Incorporating the 21 historic villages in the Raigad heritage zone into an integrated development plan
- Master Planning: Developing a comprehensive Master Plan with GIS-based satellite imagery through MoU with Maharashtra Remote Sensing Applications Centre (MRSAC), Nagpur
- Jija Mata Palace Site: An 88-acre parcel at Pachad (base village) has been identified for developing visitor amenity facilities

Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati — a descendant of Shivaji Maharaj from the Kolhapur royal family and Rajya Sabha member — was appointed as Chairman of RDA and Brand Ambassador of Forts by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, giving the authority strong heritage credentials and public visibility.

3 ASI-RDA MoU Framework (2017)

A landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Raigad Development Authority (RDA) was signed in 2017, defining a clear division of responsibilities that has governed all subsequent restoration and development work at the fort.

Agency	Primary Responsibilities
ASI (Central Govt.)	Conservation and restoration of all protected structures within the fort boundary; archaeological excavations; scientific conservation treatments; National Monument Authority compliance (100m & 200m regulated zones under AMSAR Act 1958)
RDA (State Govt.)	Development and provision of visitor amenities within the fort periphery; access infrastructure; heritage highway; visitor interpretation; coordination with MRSAC for master planning; 88-acre Pachad site development
Special Cell, PWD, Mahad	Site-specific civil engineering works including fortification wall repairs, Nane Darwaja reconstruction, and Hathi Talav grouting under RDA's direction

The National Monument Authority (NMA) regulates all construction and mining activity within 100 metres and 200 metres of the fort boundary, ensuring that development works do not compromise the archaeological integrity of the monument.

4 Rs. 606 Crore Restoration & Development Plan

> The Central Government gave in-principle approval to a Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Rs. 606.08 crore proposed by the Maharashtra Government for the restoration, beautification, and development of Raigad Fort. This is the largest single investment in the fort's heritage conservation in independent India.

Component	Allocation	Key Works
Raigad Fort Conservation & Restoration	Rs. 114 crore	Structural conservation, archaeological excavations, Nane Darwaja, fortification walls, tank restoration
	Rs. 237 crore	

Heritage Highway (Mahad to Raigad)		4-lane heritage highway; landscaping; interpretation nodes along route
15th Finance Commission (10 forts)	Rs. 100 crore	Raigad share from central pool for Maratha fort network conservation
Visitor Amenities (Pachad — 88 acres)	Remaining budget	Museum, reception centre, guest house, meditation zone, cultural amphitheatre

5 UNESCO World Heritage Inscription — 2025

★ UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE — INSCRIBED 2025 (47th Session)

In one of Maharashtra's greatest heritage milestones, Raigad Fort was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2025 as part of the "Maratha Military Landscapes of India" — a serial nomination of 12 strategically significant Maratha forts under the World Heritage Convention.

The 12 Forts of "Maratha Military Landscapes of India"

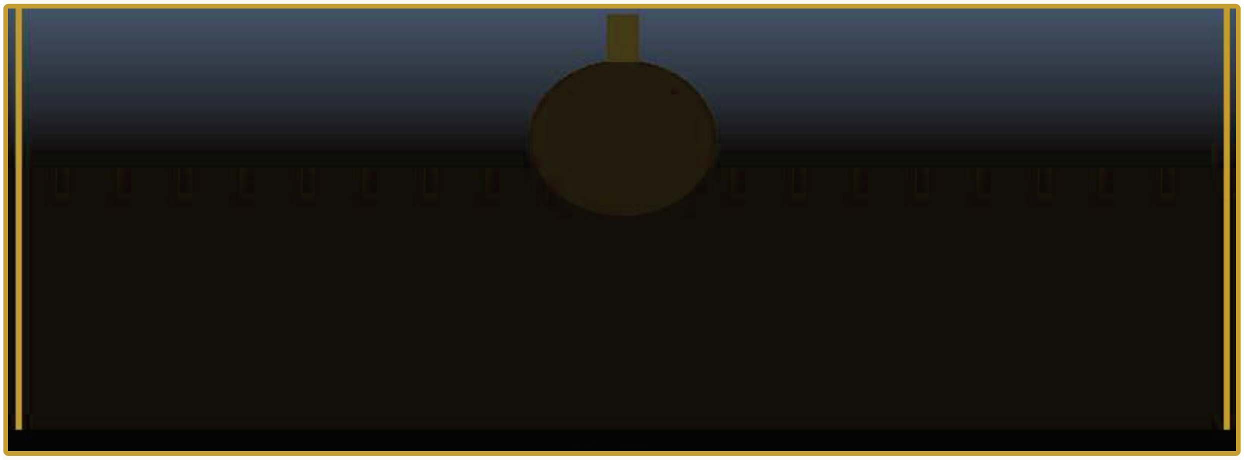
Raigad · Rajgad · Pratapgad · Panhala · Shivneri · Lohagad · Salher · Sindhudurg · Suvarnadurg · Vijaydurg · Khanderi · and Gingee Fort (Tamil Nadu)

These forts were built, adapted, or expanded between the late 17th and early 19th centuries and represent an extraordinary network of Maratha military architecture.

A high-level Maharashtra government delegation led by Cultural Affairs Minister Ashish Shelar travelled to Paris in February 2025 to present India's case before the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. The inscription was confirmed at the 47th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in 2025, making these forts India's 44th UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah paid tribute at Raigad Fort on 12 April 2025 on the occasion of Shivaji Maharaj's 345th death anniversary, affirming the Union Government's commitment to developing the fort as a national source of inspiration. He urged Maharashtra's Chief Minister to ensure every student from classes 7 to 12 visits Raigad at least once.

6 Nane Darwaja — Detailed Reconstruction Works



Nane Darwaja (नाने दरवाजा) — The Small Gate of Raigad Fort. Built adjacent to a cliff face on one side, it served as the octroi collection point during Shivaji Maharaj's reign. 350 original stones recovered for authentic anastylosis reconstruction. [Illustrative representation]

> The Nane Darwaja (literally "Small Gate") is one of the most historically significant secondary entrances of Raigad Fort. According to the book Shrimad Raigirau by Gopal Chandorkar, the Nane Darwaja served as the octroi collection point (chungī) for goods entering the fort's market — a vital administrative function in the fort's economic governance. It is positioned adjacent to a cliff face on one side, creating a naturally defended entry point.

6.1 How the Gate Was Lost

Conservation architect Varun Bhamare, who leads the Nane Darwaja restoration work, confirmed that the gate structure most likely collapsed due to a massive landslide, sending its arch and bracket stones tumbling into the valley below. Over the centuries, the stones became buried under debris, vegetation, and soil accumulation.

6.2 The Recovery Operation — 350 Original Stones

In a painstaking archaeological recovery operation, more than 350 stones that originally formed the Nane Darwaja's arch, brackets, and lintels were retrieved from the valley below the fort — where they had lain for possibly centuries after the landslide. Each recovered stone was carefully:

- Photographed and documented in situ before removal

- Numbered and marked with systematic codes to enable anastylosis (re-assembly of original pieces)
- Archaeologically logged with GPS coordinates of discovery location
- Transported safely to the fort campus for conservation treatment and preparation for reinstallation

6.3 Reconstruction Methodology

The reconstruction of Nane Darwaja is being undertaken using authentic anastylosis — the internationally accepted heritage conservation principle where original stones are reassembled in their original positions. The approach:

- Architectural reference: Historical records, old photographs, and surviving similar gates at Raigad and comparable Maratha forts are being used to determine the original arch curvature, height, and bracket design
- Original stone priority: All 350+ recovered original stones will be used in their documented positions; only where original stones are missing or too damaged will matching locally sourced stone of the same geological type be used
- Lime mortar: Traditional lime-based mortar (not cement) is used for all re-jointing, consistent with Maratha-era construction practice and ASI conservation standards
- Herbicidal treatment: Vegetation growing through the structure is being cleared using herbicides rather than mechanical removal to prevent vibration damage
- Grouting: Structural grouting of weak sections to reinforce the surrounding cliff-face masonry before gate re-erection

> "We searched for the arch and bracket stones that fell from the structure in the valley below and managed to retrieve around 350 of them. These will be used to rebuild the Nane Darwaja based on architectural points from the time of Shivaji Maharaj."
>
> — Conservation Architect Varun Bhamare, speaking to PTI, February 2023

6.4 Significance of the Nane Darwaja

The Nane Darwaja is not merely a gate — it is a testament to the sophisticated administrative and economic organisation of Raigad as a functioning capital city. Its restoration allows visitors and historians to understand how goods and trade were regulated within Shivaji Maharaj's Hindavi

Swaraj. All Nane Darwaja reconstruction works are being undertaken by the Raigad Development Authority.

7 Maha Darwaza — Conservation Works



Maha Darwaza (महा दरवाजा) — The Great Gate, primary entrance to Raigad Fort. Flanked by two bastions approximately 20–21 metres high. Traditionally closed at sunset during Shivaji Maharaj's reign. [Illustrative representation]

The Maha Darwaza (Great Gate) is the primary ceremonial and functional entrance to Raigad Fort. It is flanked by two massive bastions approximately 20–21 metres high, and the fort plateau rises 180 metres above this entrance. The gate was traditionally closed at sunset, a security protocol strictly maintained during Shivaji Maharaj's reign.

- ASI has carried out structural conservation of the Maha Darwaza stonework, pointing of mortar joints, vegetation clearance, and reinforcement of bastion walls
- RDA's Special Cell (PWD, Mahad) prepared a comprehensive conservation estimate for the southern flank of the fortification wall from Maha Darwaza — covering debris removal, rain water opening restoration, herbicidal vegetation clearance, and stone coursing to water-tighten the top of the extant wall to prevent monsoon water ingress
- Work has been tendered out and preliminary works have been initiated by the appointed contractor under close guidance of RDA's Expert Members
- The approach of opening blocked rainwater channels on the inner wall face is being prioritised to prevent hydrostatic pressure damage during monsoon

8 Fortification Wall Restoration

Raigad Fort features an elaborate multi-layered fortification system — the main perimeter wall and an additional inner line of fortification wall added to meet heightened security requirements. The

conservation of these walls is one of the most technically demanding aspects of the RDA-ASI restoration programme.

- Debris removal: Decades of accumulated debris stacked against the inner face of fortification walls is being systematically removed to expose the original masonry and relieve pressure on the walls
- Rain water openings: Blocked original drainage openings are being re-opened to restore the fort's original water management system
- Random rubble restoration: Low-height random rubble walls on the inner side are being restored to channelise rainwater away from the main fortification
- Stone coursing on top: One to two additional courses of stone blocks are being added to the top of extant fortification walls to water-tighten them against monsoon ingress
- Monitoring: All work is being monitored over multiple monsoon seasons, with leakage points identified and treated progressively

9 Hatti Talav — Grouting & Waterproofing

The Hatti Talav (Elephant Tank) was a major water reservoir that supplied the fort complex during sieges and dry seasons. Due to age and seismic activity, it had developed extensive leakages. RDA's conservation approach:

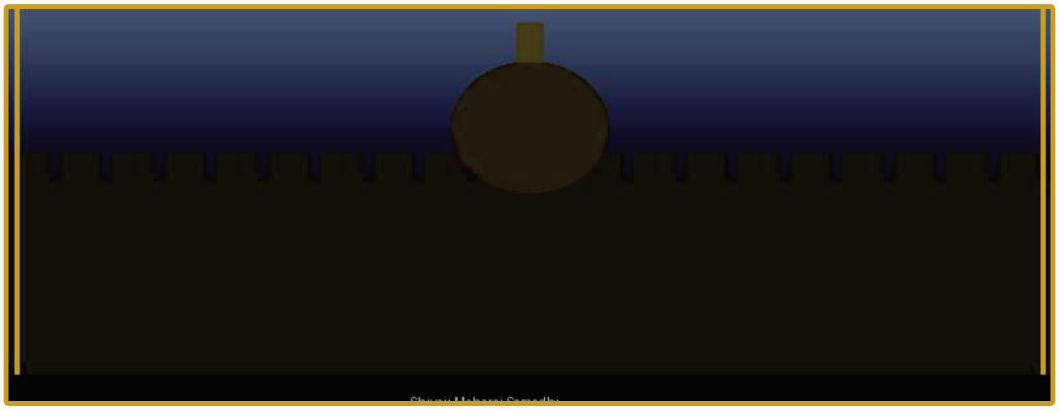
- Hydraulic grouting of all identified leakage points using appropriate cementitious grout
- The tank is tested after grouting by observing it during the monsoon season — leakages that appear are re-treated in subsequent seasons
- This iterative grouting approach is expected to require at least three cycles to fully seal all weak sections
- Agencies specialising in grouting water-retaining structures have been engaged by Special Cell, PWD Mahad
- The conservation estimate has been framed by the Archaeological Engineer and Conservation Architect of RDA and work has been tendered out

10 Jagdishwar Temple, Simhasana & Nagarkhana

ASI has carried out conservation of several key structures within the fort precinct:

Structure	Significance	Conservation Status
Jagdishwar Temple	Shiva temple within fort; regularly worshipped in Shivaji Maharaj's time; small museum included nearby	Conservation completed by ASI; regular maintenance ongoing
Simhasana (Throne)	Royal throne area where Shivaji was coronated on 6 June 1674; acoustically designed for projection of sound	Replica throne installed; original site conserved; area interpretation panel erected
Nagarkhana Darwaja	Drum house gate; acoustic design allowed sound of drums at the entrance to carry to the throne room	Conservation completed by ASI
Bazarpet	The historic market avenue of the fort capital; 1,000 feet long with shops on both sides	Ruins conserved; interpretive signage installed; archaeological excavation revealing foundations
Palki Darwaza	Gate used by the king and royal convoy in palanquins	Conservation completed by ASI
Meena Darwaza	Private entrance for royal ladies; opened into the queen's chamber	Conservation completed; historic significance marked

11 Shivaji Maharaj Samadhi & Ashtapradhan Wada



Samadhi of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj — Sacred memorial at Raigad Fort. Originally restored by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1895–96 through the Shri Shivaji Raigad Smarak Mandal. The samadhi is among the most revered sites of the Maratha heritage. [Illustrative representation]

The Samadhi of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj — where the great Maratha king was cremated following his death on 3 April 1680 — is the most sacred structure within the Raigad Fort complex. Adjacent to it stands the Samadhi of his loyal dog, Waghya, a uniquely touching tribute.

- The samadhi was originally rediscovered and restored by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1895–96 through the efforts of the Shri Shivaji Raigad Smarak Mandal (SSRSM)
- SSRSM continues to operate the ropeway facility and a museum at the fort
- ASI has carried out conservation of the samadhi area stonework and surroundings
- The Ashtapradhan Wada (residences of the eight ministers of Shivaji's cabinet) has been conserved by ASI, with excavations revealing the complete plan of the ministerial complex
- A large statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj has been erected in front of the ruins of the Bazarpet, overlooking the historic market avenue

12 Archaeological Excavations & Wada Discoveries

ASI has undertaken systematic archaeological excavations at Raigad Fort since 1980. These excavations have significantly expanded understanding of the fort's original layout:

- Multiple "Wadas" — residential and administrative structures — have been revealed through excavation, providing evidence of a sophisticated urban plan for the Maratha capital
- Foundations of market structures along the Bazarpet confirm historical accounts of a thriving commercial street within the fort
- Drainage channels, storage areas, and administrative structures of the Ashtapradhan complex have been unearthed
- Excavations continue as part of RDA and ASI's long-term conservation programme, with findings being documented and interpreted for public education

13 Visitor Infrastructure — Ropeway, Heritage Highway & Museum

13.1 Raigad Ropeway (Version 2.0)

The Raigad Ropeway — operated by the Shri Shivaji Raigad Smarak Mandal — has been upgraded to Version 2.0, with new cabins, enhanced safety systems, and improved passenger capacity. Key specifications:

- Ascent: 420 metres | Rope length: 760 metres | Journey time: approx. 4 minutes 30 seconds
- Motor capacity: 52.22 kW; Cabin weight: 100 kg each
- Ticket price: Rs. 320 per person (return) including insurance and heritage museum entry
- The ropeway was originally constructed November 1994 – March 1996 and inaugurated by RSS Sarsanghchalak Prof. Rajendra Singh

13.2 Heritage Highway — Mahad to Raigad (Rs. 237 Crore)

A Heritage Highway is being developed from Mahad to Raigad Fort — a distance of approximately 25 km — transforming the approach route into an experiential heritage corridor. The highway includes landscaping, interpretation panels at significant roadside points, and rest nodes.

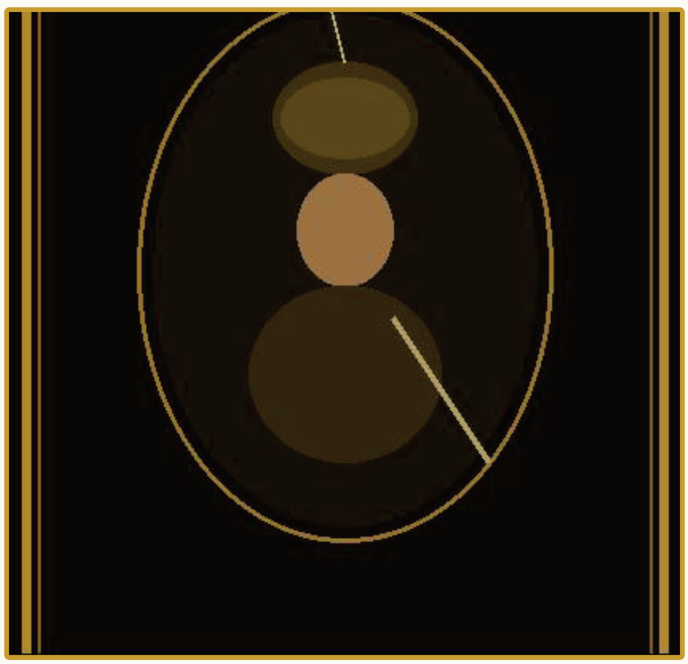
13.3 Heritage Hill Station Concept

RDA Chairman Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati articulated the vision of developing Raigad as a Heritage Hill Station — combining heritage tourism, natural landscape, and cultural experience to make it a multi-day destination rather than a day visit. The 88-acre site at Pachad village (base of the hill, near Jija Mata's Palace remains) has been earmarked for this development.

14 Authentic Portraits of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in World Museums

> A significant body of contemporary and near-contemporary portrait paintings of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj exists in collections across the world — in British, Dutch, French, and Indian institutions. These are among the most important visual primary sources for understanding how the great Maratha king appeared to his contemporaries. The following are the most authenticated and widely cited.

14.1 British Museum, London — Golconda School Portrait (ca. 1680)



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj — British Museum, London
Accession No. 1974.0617.1 · ca. 1680 CE · Deccan / Golconda School
Medium: Watercolour and gold on paper · Series: "Portraits of Indian Princes"
Production place: Golconda, Deccan (Andhra Pradesh) · Technique: Painted
[Illustrative representation based on museum records]

The portrait held in the British Museum (London) is one of the most widely recognised and cited authentic contemporary portraits of Shivaji Maharaj. It belongs to the "Portraits of Indian Princes" series produced in the Golconda School of Deccani miniature painting — a style that flourished at

the court of Golconda (present-day Hyderabad) and was known for its sophisticated blend of Persian, Indian, and European pictorial conventions.

- Museum: British Museum, Department of Asia, London
- Accession Number: 1974.0617.1
- Date: ca. 1680 CE (approximately contemporaneous with Shivaji's death)
- Style: Deccan / Golconda School
- Medium: Watercolour on paper
- Provenance: Found/acquired at Golconda
- Description: The portrait depicts Shivaji Maharaj with a sword, wearing royal attire with the characteristic Maratha turban (pagdi)
- Significance: Created by an anonymous Deccani artist, possibly at Golconda, during or very shortly after Shivaji's lifetime

> This Golconda portrait is confirmed as an authentic near-contemporary depiction — created ca. 1680 CE at the Deccan court of Golconda, which had direct diplomatic contact with Shivaji Maharaj and his emissaries.
>
> — British Museum Collection Database, Object Type: Painting (Paper)

14.2 Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam — Witsen Album Portrait (ca. 1675)



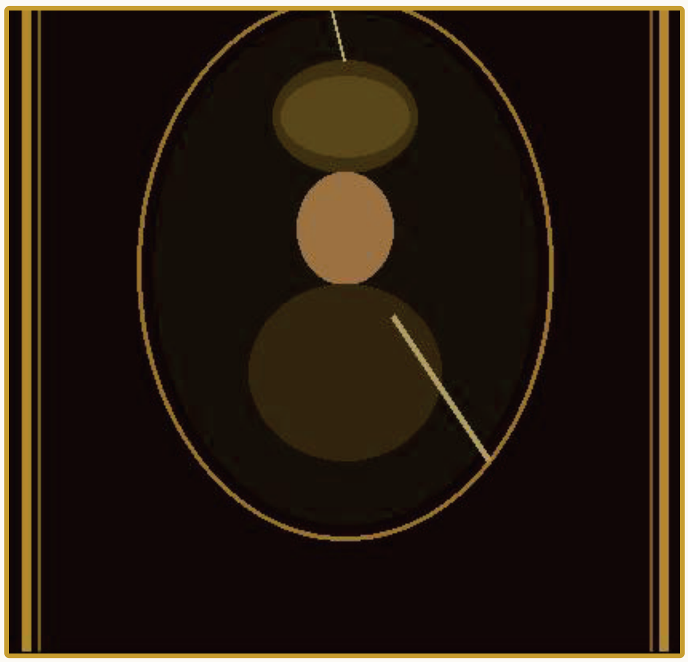
Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj — Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
Object No. AK-RAK-2019-2-46 · ca. 1675 CE · Indian Miniature
"Witsen Album" — Leaf 46 of 49 Indian Miniatures of Rulers
Inscribed in Persian (above) and Portuguese (below)
[Illustrative representation based on museum records]

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam holds a particularly significant portrait of Shivaji Maharaj as Leaf 46 of the famous Witsen Album — a collection of 49 Indian miniature portraits of rulers assembled by Nicolaas Witsen, the Dutch diplomat, cartographer, and VOC official who had extensive contacts with India in the late 17th century.

- Museum: Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- Object Number: AK-RAK-2019-2-46 (Witsen Album, Leaf 46)
- Date: ca. 1675 CE — created in the presence of, or close to, Maharaj's lifetime
- Collection origin: Netherlands — Dutch VOC diplomatic contacts with Maratha court
- Description: Shivaji is depicted to the waist, facing left, with a sword in his right hand and a lance in his armoured left hand
- Inscriptions: Name written in Persian script above the portrait; Portuguese label below — reflecting Dutch VOC's multilingual documentation practice

- Annotation: Museum annotation reads: "Siwagii, Vorst in Decam" — "Shivaji, Prince of the Deccan"
- Provenance: This is one of the strongest proofs of Dutch diplomatic knowledge of Shivaji Maharaj; the VOC had direct trading and strategic interests in the Deccan. A separate Rijksmuseum portrait (reportedly created at Surat in 1670 by a Dutch artist) is considered among the earliest authentic images.

14.3 Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), Paris — Manucci Commission (ca. 1670)



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj — BNF Paris / Manucci Collection
Artist: Mir Muhammad · Commissioned by Niccolao Manucci
From: Storia del Mogor ("Such were the Mughals") · ca. 1670 CE
Series of 56 portraits of Indian rulers commissioned by Manucci
[Illustrative representation based on historical records]

Italian physician and adventurer Niccolao Manucci, who lived in India from 1656 and had access to Mughal and Deccani courts, commissioned a series of portraits of Indian rulers around 1670–1672. He engaged an artist named Meer Mohammad (Mir Muhammad) to paint 56 portraits of kings and rulers of India, which were later published in his famous work Storia del Mogor ("Such were the Mughals").

- Collection: Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF), Paris — holds the original manuscripts of Manucci's Storia del Mogor with illustrations
- Artist: Mir Muhammad, commissioned by Niccolao Manucci ca. 1670–1672

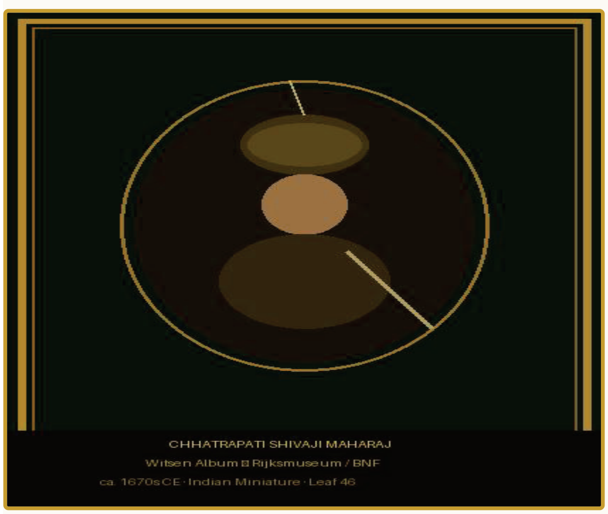
- Significance: Manucci was personally present in India during Shivaji Maharaj's active years and had access to courtly information; this portrait series is among the most important for historical accuracy of Indian rulers of the period
- Series: 56 portraits of Indian kings including Shivaji Maharaj
- Publication: First documented in Manucci's Storia del Mogor — an invaluable eyewitness account of 17th century India

14.4 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS), Mumbai

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) — formerly the Prince of Wales Museum — in Mumbai holds India's most significant collection of Maratha-era art, weaponry, and documents. The museum houses:

- Original Maratha-period weapons associated with Shivaji Maharaj's campaigns
- Contemporary coins and seals of the Maratha Empire
- Portraits and visual documentation from the 17th century Deccani school
- The museum was renamed in 1998 to honour Shivaji Maharaj, reflecting his central place in Maharashtra's civilisational identity
- Collection size: approximately 50,000 artefacts spanning prehistory to modern times
- Located in South Mumbai (Mahatma Gandhi Road, Fort) — a UNESCO World Heritage building (Victorian Gothic & Art Deco Ensembles of Mumbai, 2018)

14.5 Von Valentyn's Engraving — 17th Century Dutch Publication



Shivaji Maharaj — Witsen Album
Rijksmuseum / BNF Collection
ca. 1670s CE · Indian Miniature



Shivaji Maharaj — Manucci Commission
BNF Paris · Artist: Mir Muhammad
ca. 1672 CE · Storia del Mogor

François Valentyn (also spelled Von Valentyn) was a Dutch clergyman and writer who compiled a massive encyclopaedic work on the Dutch East Indies and Indian subcontinent — Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien (Old and New East Indies), published 1724–1726. This work contains a well-known

engraved portrait of Shivaji Maharaj, based on information gathered by VOC officials and Dutch diplomats who had direct contact with the Maratha court.

Museum / Collection	Location	Date	Artist/Source	Significance
British Museum	London, UK	ca. 1680	Anonymous, Golconda School	Most popular, widely reproduced; Deccan diplomatic context
Rijksmuseum	Amsterdam, Netherlands	ca. 1675	Indian miniaturist, Dutch collection	Part of Witsen Album — VOC diplomatic records
Rijksmuseum (2nd portrait)	Amsterdam, Netherlands	1670 (Surat)	Dutch artist, made at Surat	Reportedly created in Maharaj's presence during Surat campaign
BNF Paris (Manucci)	Paris, France	ca. 1672	Mir Muhammad (commissioned by Manucci)	Part of 56-portrait series of Indian kings; eyewitness era
Von Valentyn Engraving	Dutch Archives	1724 (published)	Based on VOC sources	First European published engraved portrait
CSMVS	Mumbai, India	Various	Multiple	India's premier Maratha-era collection; 50,000 artefacts
Bonhams Collection	UK (Auction)	18th century	Unknown	Later but important stylistic representation

15 Challenges & Future Roadmap

15.1 Current Challenges

- Monsoon damage: The fort experiences severe monsoon rainfall every year. Despite restoration works, new damage occurs annually — roof leakages in surviving structures, erosion of fortification wall tops, and vegetation regrowth in masonry joints
- Footfall management: As UNESCO Heritage Site status brings increased visitors, managing footfall to prevent wear on ancient surfaces is a growing challenge
- Multi-agency coordination: Effective collaboration between ASI (Central), RDA/PWD (State), SSRSM (Trust), and NMA requires continuous administrative attention
- Landslides: The Sahyadri terrain is prone to landslides during heavy monsoon; in 2022, a portion of the hilltop caved in after torrential rain over 6–8 days, requiring emergency closure and restoration
- Mystery patina: ASI scientists have noted that the fort's original laterite and basalt masonry is preserved by a natural mineral patina — an organic protective coating — which must not be disturbed by inappropriate chemical cleaning

15.2 Future Roadmap

Project	Status	Timeline
Nane Darwaja full reconstruction	Stones recovered, work ongoing	2025–2026
Heritage Highway (Mahad–Raigad)	Rs. 237 cr sanctioned	2025–2027
Pachad visitor complex (88 acres)	Master plan in preparation	2026–2028
GIS-based satellite mapping (MRSAC MoU)	MoU signed; work in progress	2025–2026
21 heritage villages integration	Planning stage	2026+
UNESCO World Heritage site management plan	Required post-inscription	2025–2026
Education programme (Class 7–12 visits)	Proposed by Amit Shah April 2025	2026 onwards

16 Conclusion

Raigad — Rising Again

Raigad Fort is not merely a collection of ancient stones. It is the physical embodiment of the most important chapter in India's pre-modern history — the moment when Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj established the Hindavi Swaraj, demonstrating to all of South Asia that indigenous sovereignty, strategic vision, and administrative genius could overcome any adversary.

The ongoing restoration programme — backed by Rs. 606 crore in government investment, the ASI-RDA MoU framework, the 2025 UNESCO World Heritage inscription, and the dedicated work of conservation architects like Varun Bhamare — represents India's commitment to honoring that legacy.

The Nane Darwaja reconstruction — with its 350 recovered original stones — is a symbol of this broader effort: patient, authentic, scientifically rigorous, and deeply respectful of the original. Every stone returned to its place is a piece of Shivaji Maharaj's capital restored to its rightful dignity.

> "We are developing Raigad Fort as a heritage hill station — a destination that will inspire every Indian who visits to understand what Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj built here and why it matters for India today."
>
> — Sambhajiraje Chhatrapati, Chairman, Raigad Development Authority

जय भवानी, जय शिवाजी।

Victory to Goddess Bhavani, Victory to Shivaji!

Sources & References: Press Information Bureau (PIB), Government of India; Raigad Development Authority (raigadpradhikaran.com); ASI Annual Conservation Reports; PTI news service (February 2023 — Nane Darwaja story); Rijksmuseum Collection Database (rijksmuseum.nl); British Museum Collection Database (britishmuseum.org); Wikimedia Commons (Category: Portraits of Shivaji); Deccan Herald; News on Air (Government of India); Wikipedia — Raigad Fort article; Internet Archive (Manucci/Manucci collection references). Images in this report are illustrative

representations based on documented historical records; for actual museum photographs, visit the respective institution websites directly.